

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 H-01 L-01 INR-05 PM-03 PA-01  
SP-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00  
ICAE-00 INRE-00 /038 W  
-----020087 092358Z /21

O R 092250Z AUG 78  
FM AMEMBASSY QUITO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9077  
INFO AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 QUITO 5585

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, EC  
SUBJECT: ROLDOS AND HURTADO SEEKING ALLIES AMONG MILITARY  
AND ELSEWHERE

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE JAIME ROLDOS AND  
RUNNING MATE OSVALDO HURTADO TOLD EMBOFFS ON AUGUST 7-8 THAT  
THEY HAD BEEN PURSUING MILITARY CONTACTS INTENSIVELY AND THAT  
THEY WERE ENCOURAGED BY THE RESPONSES THUS FAR. WE OBSERVE  
THAT BIGGEST STUMBLING BLICKS THAT ROLDOS HAS IN THIS  
ENDEAVOR ARE MILITARY ATTITUDES TOWARD BUCARAM AND HURTADO.  
ALTHOUGH A BREAK MAY NOT BE IN THE CARDS, ROLDOS' RELATIONS  
WITH BUCARAM SEEM STRAINED AT THE MOMENT. HOWEVER, HIS  
RELATIONS WITH HURTADO ARE EXCELLENT AND HE IS UNLIKELY TO SELL  
HIM OUT IN EXCHANGE FOR MILITARY APPROVAL. END SUMMARY.

2. DCM AND POLCOUNS SPOKE AT LENGTH WITH PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE  
JAIME ROLDOS AND RUNNING MATE OSVALDO HURTADO ON NIGHT/MORNING  
AUGUST 7-8. IN FACE OF GROWING CONCERN AND SUSPICION THAT  
MILITARY WOULD INVERVENE IN ELECTORAL PROCESS AND SUSPEND  
IT, ROLDOS PRONOUNCED HIMSELF NEIGHTER PESSIMISTIC NOR  
OPTIMISTIC ON THE BASIS OF HIS CONTINUING DIALOGUE WITH  
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MILITARY OFFICERS. ROLDOS SAID THAT HE OR HURTADO HAD  
HELD INTERVIEWS RECENTLY WITH ARMY GENERALS DOBRONSKY,  
CABRERA, RODRIGUEZ PALACIOS, SUBIA, MINO, VARGAS PAZZOS,  
SALAZAR MENDIETA AND MORALES. ALL, HE SAID, EXCEPT  
RODRIGUEZ, HAD REACTED RATHER FAVORABLY. THEY  
HAD REPEATED THE ARMY'S DESIRE TO SEE THE PROCESS THROUGH  
TO THE END AND HAND OVER POWER TO WHOMEVER WAS ELECTED.

IN FACT, ROLDOS RELATED THAT HE HAD SPENT THREE HOURS WITH DOBRONSKY (MINISTER OF EDUCATION) AND DECLARED THAT DOBRONSKY HAD EVINCED SOME ENTHUSIASM ABOUT THE PROSPECT OF A ROLDOS GOVERNMENT A COUPLE OF TIMES DURING THE INTERVIEW. HE COUNTED SALAZAR, LEVOYER, AND VARGAS AS VERY WELL DISPOSED.

3. ROLDOS CONTINUED THAT HE HAD ALSO MET SEMI-CLANDESTINELY WITH SEVEN BATTALION COMMANDERS OVER THE PAST FOUR DAYS, AND INDICATED THAT THEY WERE MORE OPENLY POSITIVE THAN THE GENERALS. IN ADDITION, ROLDOS THOUGHT THAT IN THE NAVY, ALL BUT CHIEF OF JOINT COMMAND OLMEDO AND PERHAPS POVEDA HIMSELF FAVORED THE DEMOCRATIC ALTERNATIVE. HE ADMITTED THAT THEY MIGHT HAVE BEEN TAKEN IN BY THE GENERALS AND THAT THEY WERE ONLY PLAYING POLITICS TOO. NOTING THAT THEY WOULD FINALLY ACT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR OWN PERSONAL INTERESTS AS WELL AS THAT OF THE NATION, ROLDOS SAID THAT HE WOULD CONTINUE TO TALK, BELIEVING THAT HE HAD LITTLE TO LOSE.

4. ROLDOS ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE PROCESS WAS ULTIMATELY IN THE HANDS OF THE MILITARY AND THERE WAS LITTLE THAT COULD BE DONE EXCEPT TO PLAY OUT THE STRING. THE MILITARY HAD GIVEN THEIR INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE WORDS THAT THE PROCESS WOULD BE RESPECTED, AND DESPITE THE GREAT PRESSURES ON THE MILITARY BY THE GUAYAQUIL OLIGARCHY, HE  
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SAID THAT HE HAD A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF FAITH IN THE HONOR OF THE ARMED FORCES.

5. ROLDOS SAID THAT HE HAD LUNCHEDED EARLIER THAT DAY WITH GALO PLAZA AND HAD SOUGHT TO PERSUADE HIM TO TAKE A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN THWARTING ANY ATTEMPT TO DEVIATE FROM THE ELECTORAL PROCESS. ACCORDING TO ROLDOS, PLAZA WAS RATHER OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE COMPLETION OF THE PROCESS, BELIEVING THAT THE MILITARY WAS TOO DIVIDED TO TAKE DECISIVE ACTION. PLAZA PREFERRED TO WAIT UNTIL A MORE CRUCIAL MOMENT SOMETIME DOWN THE ROAD. ROLDOS SAID THAT HE WAS LESS ANGUINE THAN PLAZA AND SUGGESTED THAT US DO WHAT IT COULD TO INDUCE PLAZA TO GET OUT IN FRONT. ON THE OTHER HAND, ROLDOS OBSERVED THAT PLAZA'S WIDELY PUBLICIZED INTERVIEW IN EXPRESO OF GUAYAQUIL IN WHICH HE ASSUMED THAT ROLDOS WOULD BE PRESIDENT AND JUDGED THAT IT WOULD BE GOOD FOR THE COUNTRY WAS QUITE HELPFUL.

6. HURTADO WAS MORE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THEIR CHANCES OF GETTING THROUGH THE ELECTIONS ON THE BASIS OF HIS OWN SOUNDINGS IN THE MILITARY. HE FELT THAT THERE WAS

AMPLE GROUND FOR THE FORGING OF WHAT HE CHOSE TO TERM  
A CIVILIAN-MILITARY DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE WHEREIN THE  
PRO-RETORNO MILITARY FORCES WOULD MAKE THEIR STAND.  
HE BELIEVED THAT THERE WAS SUFFICIENT FEELING AGAINST  
THE CONSPIRATORS WITHIN THE MILITARY TO PRECIPITATE A  
REBELLION IN THE PROCESS WERE OVERTURNED. ROLDOS,  
HOWEVER, DEPRECATED THAT ASSESSMENT, BELIEVING THAT IT  
WAS MORE LIKELY THAT THE DISSIDENT GENERALS WOULD SWALLOW  
THEIR DISAGREEMENT IF PUSH CAME TO SHOVE.

7. COMMENT: ROLDOS AND HURTADO HAVE BEEN ACTIVELY  
MINING A PREVIOUSLY UNEXPLOITED VEIN IN THEIR RECENT  
MILITARY CONTACTS AND APPEAR TO BE MAKING SOME HEADWAY.  
DEFENSE ATTACHE SOUNDINGS SEEM TO CONFIRM ROLDOS'

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EXPERIENCE WITH MORE JUNION OFFICERS (BATTALION COMMANDERS)  
AND HAVE ALSO FAILED TO DISCOVER MUCH STOMACH AMONG THE GENERALS  
TO DISRUPT THE PROCESS. ROLDOS' IMAGE AND PERSONALITY  
APPEAR TO HAVE A MOLLIFYING EFFECT ON THE MILITARY AND  
HE APPEARS WISE TO GO AHEAD WITH THIS TACK.

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FM AMEMBASSY QUITO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9078

INFO AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 QUITO 5585

LIMDIS

8. ROLDOS' TOUGHEST PROBLEMS IN ATTEMPTING TO ASSUAGE  
APPREHENSIONS AMONG THE MILITARY ARE BUCARAM'S PLACE

IN THE NEW GOVERNMENT AND HURTADO'S IDENTIFICATION WITH CHRISTIAN SOCIALISM. ROLDOS HAS BEEN TELLING THE MILITARY THAT BUCARAM WILL NOT BE IN THE GOVERNMENT, BUT IN CONGRESS, AND THOUGH HE CANNOT PROMISE TO MUZZLE BUCARAM, BUCARAM WILL NOT PLAY A PREDOMINANT PART IN POLICY-MAKING. THERE IS INCREASING EVIDENCE THAT ROLDOS AND BUCARAM ARE DRIFTING AWAY FROM EACH OTHER PERSONALLY AND POLITICALLY. ROLDOS SEEMS MUCH MORE AT HOME AMONG THE YOUNG POPULAR DEMOCRAT PROFESSIONALS THAN WITH THE DIRTY-COLLARED CADRES OF THE CFP. BUCARAM MAY SENSE THIS AND HAS BEEN DESCRIBED RECENTLY AS VERY JEALOUS OF ROLDOS' SUCCESS AND HIS POSSIBILITY OF ASCENDING TO THE POSITION WHICH BUCARAM FEELS SHOULD BE HIS. WHILE ROLDOS AND HURTADO HAVE ATTEMPTED TO STILL THE FEARS OF THOSE WHO BELIEVE THEM IRRESPONSIBLE OR STATIST, BUCARAM HAS BEEN GOING THE OTHER WAY IN HIS WEEKLY RADIO ADDRESSES, BULLYING AND THREATENING THOSE WHO OPPOSE THEM. THE TIES OF MARRIAGE, PLUS BASIC POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS, MAY BE THE ONLY THINGS THAT WILL KEEP THE TWO TOGETHER.

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9. ALLAYING FEARS ABOUT HURTADO MAY BE MORE DIFFICULT. ROLDOS AND HURTADO GET ALONG VERY WELL TOGETHER AND HURTADO'S POLITICAL VALUE WAS DEMONSTRATED BY THE SURPRISINGLY LARGE VOTE THAT ROLDOS OBTAINED IN THE SIERRA. IF ROLDOS WAS FORCED BY THE MILITARY TO CHOOSE BETWEEN HURTADO AND THE PRESIDENCY, WE SUSPECT THAT ROLDOS WOULD REMAIN FIRM ON KEEPING HURTADO ON HIS TEAM. IT MUST BE ADDED THAT MUCH OF THE MILITARY CONCERN ABOUT HURTADO IS ARTIFICIAL. HURTADO WORKED VERY CLOSELY WITH GOE IN BRINGING THE RETORNO PLAY ALONG IN THE INITIAL STAGES, AND POVEDA REMARKED TO FORMER AMBASSADOR BLOOMFIELD ONCE THAT POLITICIANS LIKE HURTADO REPRESENTED THE HOPE OF ECUADOR. IF WAS ONLY AFTER HURTADO BLEW THE WHISTLE ON A LATE 1977 CONSPIRACY TO CONVERT THE RETORNO PROCESS INTO A CIVIL-MILITARY INTERIM GOVERNMENT, DID HE SEEM TO FALL INTO HIS PRESENT OBLOQUY.  
GONZALEZ

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## Message Attributes

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